



**CAMBRIANS FOR WATER**  
**C4 H2O**  
**WWW.CAMBRIANSFORWATER.COM**  
**P.O. BOX 484**  
**CAMBRIA CA 93428**

October 8, 2014

California Department of Water Resources  
Division of Integrated Regional Water Management  
Financial Assistance Branch  
Post Office Box 942836,  
Room 1115-1  
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001  
Attn: Mark Cowin

Re: Reconsideration of Cambria Community Services District's Proposition 84 Grant Fund Award

Dear Mr. Cowin,

As leaders of Cambrian's for Water (C4 H2O), we are gratified to learn that the Department of Water Resources has lifted its disqualification of San Luis Obispo County's IRWM grant application for Proposition 84 aid to drought-related projects, including Cambria's Emergency Water System (EWS). The next step, as we understand it, is for the Department of Water Resources to decide whether to re-establish funding for the County, and, if so, how much funding to provide.

In that context, we want to reiterate a request made by Greg Hunter, one of C4 H2O's co-founders, in a letter sent to the Department on October 6, 2014. That is to fund the grant, in the full amount of \$3.75 million, that San Luis Obispo applied for to help defray costs of the Cambria EWS project.

To review: C4 H2O is a grass-roots community group that was formed to support the Cambria Community Services District's EWS project, including but not limited to the CCSD's application for the Proposition 84. In the six weeks since C4 H2O was formed, the organization has grown to



more than six hundred (600) members and continues to expand daily, which reflects how important the EWS project is to the relatively small community of Cambria.

Cambrian's have been suffering the consequences of water shortages for a decade, if not longer, as reflected by the fact that, historically, we have had among the lowest water consumption rates among California towns and cities. When the current drought hit, Cambrian's responded by conserving water even more, reducing water consumption by 40 percent below our already low level. However, Cambria's conservation efforts have come at considerable cost to the health, safety, economic well-being and quality of life of our community.

Cambrian's no longer use any potable water to irrigate landscaping. Some residents pay steep prices for non-potable water (when they can find it) while many of us have simply ceased watering our outdoor plants altogether. The result is not only aesthetically unappealing, the dead and dry landscaping creates an added fire hazard, which is particularly alarming in a semi-rural area such as ours and during a drought. In addition, many Cambrian's have cut back on the number and length of their showers, minimize the number of "flushes" per day and when they do flush, bucket grey water for the purpose. These practices are not only inconvenient but if allowed to persist will threaten the health, safety and well-being of our citizens, many of whom are seniors.

This community has sought to address its water shortage not only through this aggressive conservation, but also through construction of the EWS project. The project, due to be completed in mid-November, has a construction price tag of just over \$9 million, which is being covered *entirely* by the CCSD and its ratepayers. The CCSD has taken out a 20-year loan to finance most of the project, and Cambria residents and businesses have agreed to a substantial rate increase to pay the loan, other construction costs and operating expenses. However, this rate increase does not address the capital needs connected with Cambria's aging water and sewer system. A further rate increase is likely, adding to the burdens already shouldered by ratepayers, especially senior citizens on fixed incomes.

It was with these needs in mind that the CCSD participated in San Luis Obispo County's IRWM grant application to receive funding of up to \$3.75 million to reimburse a portion of the EWS project costs. We are a small community greatly in need of financial relief, just as we need the EWS to get us through this drought and droughts of the future. Failing to receive the IRWM grant money will cause more economic hardship on top of what we have suffered directly from the drought.

As you know, the Central Coast area was ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 11 State regions in terms of drought impacts and need. The CCSD's EWS satisfies or exceeds all parameters for Proposition 84 grant funding in the amount of the CCSD's application. While Cambria is committed to constructing the EWS with or without receiving grant funding, we are a small community. This grant means a

great deal to us. It will help relieve budgetary constraints and will allow us promptly to undertake necessary infrastructure maintenance and improvement that may, otherwise, need to be deferred.

Thank you for considering this submission, and we hope you will view Cambria's application for grant funding favorably.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Michael Erwin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Erwin".

Michael Erwin  
Director, Cambrian's for Water

cc: Zaffar Eussuf  
Keith Wallace